



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number: S. 0078 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Work Experience Credit for Educators
Requestor: Senate Education
RFA Analyst(s): Wren
Impact Date: January 17, 2025

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill allows an individual's prior years of work experience to be awarded on an educator certificate if the prior experience is in, or related to, the content field of the certificate for which the individual qualifies. One year of experience credit may be awarded for every two years of full-time relevant work experience. If additional years of experience are awarded, the eligible individual is entitled to a pay adjustment for the current school year to reflect the new experience step on the employing district's salary schedule.

This bill will increase General Fund expenses of the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE) by \$191,160 in FY 2025-26. Of this amount, \$67,160 is for recurring salary and fringe benefits for 1.0 FTE to evaluate and process certification requests, \$4,000 is for initial equipment costs, and \$120,000 is for one-time reprogramming of the SC Educator system to distinguish between teaching experience credit and non-teaching or related experience. Expenses will decrease to \$67,160 beginning in FY 2026-27 for the 1.0 FTE. SCDE will request a General Fund appropriation increase to fund these expenses.

The impact on state agency schools will vary. The Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe, the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact since they can manage any additional costs with existing appropriations. The School for the Deaf and Blind reports that provisions of bill allowing individuals to receive credit for prior work experience would have an expenditure impact on the agency, but the cost is undetermined. Further, the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities previously indicated that similar legislation would have no expenditure impact since the agency currently hires teachers with a minimum of three years of experience and already accounts for additional work history in its budgeted expenses.

The cost to local school districts to provide additional compensation to eligible teachers will vary depending upon the number of teachers entitled to additional credit, the additional years of experience to which each teacher is entitled, and where each teacher falls on the salary schedule. SCDE estimates that at least 9,405 educators are likely to be eligible to receive credit for prior work experience. Using the FY 2024-25 State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule as a guide, RFA estimates that the cost of one year of experience credit averages \$500 for teachers with a bachelor's degree, \$563 for a teacher with a master's degree, and \$786 for a teacher with a doctorate.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 14, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill allows an individual's prior years of work experience to be awarded on an educator certificate if the prior experience is in, or related to, the content field of the certificate for which the individual qualifies. One year of experience credit may be awarded for every two years of full-time relevant work experience. If additional years of experience are awarded, the eligible individual is entitled to a pay adjustment for the current school year to reflect the new experience step on the employing district's salary schedule.

S.C. Department of Education. SCDE indicates that this bill will increase General Fund expenses by \$191,160 in FY 2025-26. Of this amount, \$67,160 is for salary and fringe benefits for 1.0 FTE to evaluate and process certification requests, \$4,000 is for equipment costs, and \$120,000 is for reprogramming the SC Educator system to distinguish between teaching experience credit and non-teaching or related experience. Expenses will decrease to \$67,160 beginning in FY 2026-27 for the 1.0 FTE. SCDE will request a General Fund appropriation increase to fund these expenses.

State Agency Schools. The impact on state agency schools will vary. The Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact since they can manage any additional costs with existing appropriations. The Governor's School for Science and Mathematics indicates that this bill will have no expenditure impact since many of its instructors are non-certified and the agency currently gives its instructors credit for prior work experience in a related field. The School for the Deaf and Blind reports that provisions of bill allowing individuals to receive credit for prior work experience would have an expenditure impact on the agency, but the cost is undetermined. The Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities previously indicated that similar legislation would have no expenditure impact since the agency currently hires teachers with a minimum of three years of experience and already accounts for additional work history in its budgeted expenses.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

This bill allows an individual's prior years of work experience to be awarded on an educator certificate if the prior experience is in, or related to, the content field of the certificate for which the individual qualifies. One year of experience credit may be awarded for every two years of full-time relevant work experience. If additional years of experience are awarded, the eligible individual is entitled to a pay adjustment for the current school year to reflect the new experience step on the employing district's salary schedule.

SCDE indicates that of the 77,832 educators who hold a current educator certificate based on an undergraduate or graduate program or based on reciprocity, the department does not have data to

determine how many of these educators may have qualifying work experience and would be eligible for additional experience credit. However, SCDE indicates that current CTE work-based and alternative route teachers and career changers now holding a professional certificate based on their successful completion of a traditional (e.g., MAT) or alternative route program (e.g., PACE, Teachers of Tomorrow, Advanced Fine Arts, etc.) are likely to have qualifying prior work experience. SCDE reports that 1,414 educators hold a current CTE work-based certificate, while 2,155 educators hold a current alternative route certificate and are pursuing a professional certificate. Additionally, 5,836 educators hold a current valid professional certificate based on their successful completion of an alternative route program. In total, SCDE estimates that at least 9,405 educators are likely to be eligible to receive credit for prior work experience.

The additional cost per teacher per year of work experience credit will vary depending on the teacher’s degree and years of teaching experience and ranges from \$250 to \$1,500. For reference, using the FY 2024-25 State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule as a guide, RFA estimates that the cost of one year of experience credit averages \$500 for teachers with a bachelor’s degree, \$563 for a teacher with a master’s degree, and \$786 for a teacher with a doctorate. We estimate the cost of five years of additional experience credit for teachers at various places on the FY 2024-25 proposed State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule as follows:

Type of Degree	Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Prior Work Experience Credit	Estimated Cost Per Teacher
Bachelor’s Degree	0	5	\$2,000
Master’s Degree	0	5	\$2,000
Doctorate Degree	0	5	\$2,500
Bachelor’s Degree	5	5	\$3,000
Master’s Degree	5	5	\$3,000
Doctorate Degree	5	5	\$5,750
Bachelor’s Degree	10	5	\$2,500
Master’s Degree	10	5	\$3,500
Doctorate Degree	10	5	\$6,250

The cost to the local school districts to provide additional compensation to eligible teachers will vary depending upon the number of teachers entitled to additional credit, the additional years of experience to which each teacher is entitled, and where each teacher falls on the salary schedule.

Local Revenue

N/A

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director